

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3291

INFO AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 24595

E.O. GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, CD

SUBJECT: FRANCO-CHANIAN RELATIONS ON DOWNTURN

REF: FORT LAMY 1314

1. RIGHT WING PARISIAN DAILY "L'AURORE" IN SEPTEMBER 18
EDITION REPORTS CHADIAN REQUEST FOR FRENCH EVACUATION OF
MILITARY BASE AT FORT LAMY IS IMMINENT. "L'AURORE CLAIMS
THAT SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE POMPIDOU'S DEPARTURE FOR CHINA
HE LEARNED OF TOMBALBAYE'S INTENTION TO ASK FOR FRENCH
WITHDRAWAL. POMPIDOU REPORTEDLY WAS FURIOUS BUT DECIDED
TO SEND COOPERATION SECRETARY OF STATE DENIAU TO MAKE
ANOTHER EFFORT TO SAVE RELATIONSHIP. ACCORDING TO STORY,
DENIAU WAS TREATED IN PARTICULARLY "ABRUPT AND BRUTAL"
FASHION AND ON HIS RETURN BRIEFED QUAI OFFICIALS TO EFFECT
THAT FRANCE WAS READY TO LEAVE CHAD ON CONDITION THAT A
CLIMATE OF "MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING" BETWEEN TWO
COUNTRIES WAS PRESERVED.

2. "L'AURORE" STORY, WHICH MAY EXAGGERATE SITUATION RESULTING
FROM DENIAU VISIT (REPORTED REFTEL), PROBABLY CONTAINS
ELEMENTS OF TRUTH, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO POMPIDOU'S OWN
ATTITUDE. FROM SEVERAL ELYSEE AND QUAI SOURCES WE HAVE RECENTLY
BEEN TOLD OF SERIOUS AND GROWING FRENCH DISENCHANTMENT WITH
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SITUATION IN CHAD. ELYSEE PRESS SPOKESMAN ROUGAGNOU AND

SENIOR FOCCART STAFF MEMBER DUSSERRE HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU WAS PERSONALLY EXTREMELY UNHAPPY WITH TOMBALBAYE'S PERFORMANCE AS PRESIDENT AND WITH HIS STRIDENT CRITICISM OF FRENCH POLICY. DUSSERRE, WITH WHOM EMBOFF TALKED SEPTEMBER 17, SAID THA ELYSEE HAD CONCLUDED TOMBALBAYE WAS "MAD." WHEN EMBOFF OBSERVED THAT FRENCH SUBSIDIES HAD BEEN ONE OF PRINCIPAL SUPPORTS OF CHADIAN ECONOMY, DUSSERRE IMMEDIATELY RESPONDED THAT MOMENT HAD COME WHEN FRENCH WOULD HAVE TO CUT BACK SUBSTANTIALLY ON AID TO CHAD.

3. COMMENT: SIGNS OF DISENCHANTMENT WITH TOMBALBAYE AND ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT ARE SO UNIVERSAL IN FRENCH GOVERNMENT CIRCLES, THAT IT SEEMS VERY POSSIBLE MAJOR CRISIS IS BUILDING UP, ACCCOMPANIED BY AID CUT BACK AND PERHAPS FRENCH TROOP WITHDRAWAL. FRENCH PROBABLY HAVE NO ILLUSION THAT CUTBACK WILL BRING TOMBALBAYE TO HIS SENSES, BUT THEY SEEM LESS AND LESS WILLING TO POUR MONEY DOWN WHAT THEY INCREASINGLY BELIEVE IS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RATHOLE.IRWIN

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